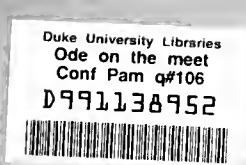


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Ode on the Meeting of the Southern Congress.

BY H. TIMROD.

Hath not the morning dawned with added light?
And will not evening call another star
Out of the infinite regions of the night,
To work this day in Heaven? At last, we are
A nation among nations; and the world
Shall soon behold in many a distant part

Another flag unfurled!

Now, come what may, whose favor need we court?
And under God whose thunder need we fear?

Thank Him who placed us here

Beneath so kind a sky—the very sun
Takes part with us; and on our errands run
All breezes of the Ocean; dew and rain
Do noiseless battle for us; and the year,
And all the gentle daughters in her train,
March in our ranks, and in our service wield

Long spears of golden grain!

A yellow blossom as her fairy shield,
June flings our azure banner to the wind,

While in the order of their birth

Her sisters pass, and many an ample field
Grows white beneath their steps, till now behold
Its endless sheafs unfold

The snow of Southern summers! Let the earth
Rejoice!—beneath those fleeces soft and warm

Our happy land shall sleep

In a repose as deep

As if we lay entrenched behind

Whole leagues of Russian ice and Arctic storm,

And what if mad with wrongs themselves have wrought

In their own treachery caught,

By their own fears made bold,

And leagued with him of old,

Who long since, in the limits of the North,

Set up his evil throne, and warred with God—

What if both mad and blinded in their rage,

Our foes should fling us down their mortal gaze,

And with a hostile step profane our sod!

We shall not shrink, my brothers, but go forth

To meet them, marshalled by the Lord of Hosts,

And overshadowed by the mighty ghosts

Of Moultrie and of Eutaw—who shall foil

Auxiliaries such as these? Nor these alone,

But every stock and stone

Shall help us; but the very soil,

And all the generous wealth it gives to toil,

And all for which we love our noble land,

Shall fight beside, and through us, sea and strand,

The heart of woman, and her hand,

Tree, fruit, and flower, and every influence,

Gentle, or grave, or grand,

The winds in our defence

Shall seem to blow; to us the hills shall lend

Their firmness and their calm;

And in our stiffened sinews we shall bleed

The strength of pine and palm.

Look where we will, we cannot find a ground

For any mournful song;

Call up the clashing elements around,

And test the right and wrong!

On one side, pledges broken, creeds that lie,

Religion sunk in vain philosophy,

Empty professions, Pharisaic leaven,

Souls that would sell their birth-right in the sky,

Philanthropists who pass the beggar by,

And laws which controvert the laws of Heaven!

And on the other—first a righteous cause!

Then Honor without flaws,

Truth, Bible reverence, charitable wealth,

And for the poor and humble, laws which give,

Not the mean right to buy the right to live,

But life, and home, and health,

To doubt the issue were distrust in God!

If in His Providence He hath decreed

That to the peace for which we pray,

Through the Red Sea of War must lie our way,

Doubt not, oh brothers, we shall find at need

A Moses with his rod!

But let our fears—if fears we have—be still,

And turn us to the future! Could we climb

Some mighty Alp, and view the coming time,

The rapturous sight would fill

Our eyes with happy tears!

Not only for the glories which the years

Shall bring us: not for lands from sea to sea,

And wealth, and power, and peace, though these shall be,

But for the distant people we shall bless,

And the hushed murmurs of a world's distress:

For to give labor to the poor,

The whole sad planet o'er,

And save from want and crime its humblest human door,

Is one among the many which

God makes us great and rich!

The hour perchance is not yet wholly ripe

When all shall own it, but behold the type

Of what we are and shall be to the rest

Of the broad earth, in our own gulf expressed,

Which through the cold untempered ocean pours

Its genial stream, that far off Arctic shores

May sometime catch upon the softened breeze,

Strange tropic warmth and hints of summer seas!

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